

[14 December, 2006]

RAJYA SABHA

Transit terminal at Vizhinjam

2540. SHRI K.P.K. KUMARAN: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the latest stance maintained by the Ministry of Defence in the matter of clearance for the Deep Water International Container Transit Terminal at Vizhinjam near Thiruvananthapuram;

(b) whether a controversy had developed regarding the Maritime Security of our country because of the involvement of a few Chinese Companies;

(c) whether the controversy has been settled now; and

(d) whether the border of Tamil Nadu lies very near the project site and whether that State would be consulted at every stage of the development?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) It will not be in public interest to disclose details.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Vizhinjam Port is a Non-Major port and the responsibility for its development vests with the State Government of Kerala.

Agreement for Space Research

2541. SHRI BALAVANT ALIAS BALAPTE:
SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the country has signed agreement with other countries in the field of space research;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the progress made so far in the field of space research?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. India has signed MoUs

Agreements for cooperation in the area of space with 27 countries/space agencies so far. These are Australia, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, China EUMETSAT, European Space Agency, France, Germany, Hungary, Indonesia, Israel, Italy, Japan, Mauritius, Mongolia, Myanmar, Norway, Peru, The Russian Federation, Sweden, Thailand, The Netherlands, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States of America and Venezuela.

(c) The major achievement of India in the field of space is the self-reliant development of world-class satellites and launch vehicles and utilising the space systems in several areas relevant to national development. India has established two operational space systems viz., INSAT system for satellite communication, broadcasting and meteorology and the Indian Remote Sensing satellite (IRS) system for natural resources management. India's Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) is well proven through eight successive successful flights providing self-reliant launch capability for IRS & Kalpana type of satellites. The Geo synchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV), capable of launching 2 Ton INSAT type of satellites, has been successfully flight tested and operationalised. India is one among the six countries in the world to demonstrate capabilities for geo-stationary satellite launch. In the area of space science, India has flown a few payloads in the past and now two dedicated science missions-Chandrayaan-1 and ASTROSAT are getting ready for a launch in the next two years.

Outsourcing of Satellite building Services

2542. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to outsource satellite building and launch-services to the private sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the estimated capacity to build satellites and whether the demand out-strips production; and

(d) the main objective of out-sourcing of this closely guarded system?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) and (b) It is ISRO's policy to outsource